

## **NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

**North Seattle Community College  
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building  
Thursday, February 24, 2005, 4:05 pm – 7:00 pm**

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The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its twelfth meeting at North Seattle Community College on Thursday, February 24, 2005 from 4:05 pm to 7:00 pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Approve meeting summary #11;
- Complete deliberation and finalize advice on the planning, financing and technical assumptions to be used in the Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP);
- Hear and discuss a second presentation on the Lorig development proposal for South Lot, and get responses to questions raised at the February 1 meeting;
- Hear an update and responses to the Stakeholder subcommittee comments on the 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Streetscape Project, and
- Discuss the March 8 Community Forum.

### **Welcome**

#### ***Welcome, Chair Ron LaFayette***

Chair Ron LaFayette convened the meeting at 4:05 PM and briefly reviewed the agenda for the meeting. He suggested and the Group concurred to take time at the March 15 meeting to review and reflect on the impact its advice has had and to look ahead to its work in the future.

### **Technical Design Workshop**

Mr. LaFayette announced that Michelle Rupp and Barbara Maxwell would represent the Stakeholders Group at the Technical Design Workshop that the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is sponsoring on March 7 from 8:30 AM to 1 PM; they are to give the Group a report at the March 15 meeting. A member suggested that the Workshop should be open to other members of the Group; she also suggested that an organization called Feet First be invited to participate because of that group's expertise and advocacy on behalf of pedestrians. Another member suggested that the Northgate Arts Council should have a representative. In response Jackie Kirn, Office of Policy and Management (OPM), said that she would pass those suggestions to DPD which was the lead for the workshop. She also identified other organizations that have been invited to participate, including the Seattle Planning Commission, the Seattle Design Commission and the Northeast Design Review Board. In response to a question about whether any design review departure requests would be considered at the workshop, Ms. Kirn said they would not. The purpose of the Technical Design Workshop was to bring designers of eight projects that will be built in the coming years together and to begin to talk about creating a sense of place and a coherent design for Northgate.

## **Announcements**

The following announcements were made:

- Representative Velva Maye reported that she had become a great grandmother on Feb. 23.
- Barbara Maxwell invited members to review the Master Plan and photos of the Maple Leaf Community Garden and reported on the status of grants for the project.
- Lorna Mrachek indicated that a public meeting on design for the Pinehurst Park would be held on March 2; she said Pinehurst hoped to get a grant from Starbucks.
- John Lombard complimented and highly recommended the North Seattle Community College's production of a play entitled, "Another Day in Baghdad."
- Sean Oleson reported that he had heard that four of six bids submitted for the library/community center/park were within the \$8.5 million budget.

## **Northgate Revitalization Project Status Report**

Referring members to a handout in their packets (p. 12), Jackie Kirn (OPM) confirmed the receipt of four bids for the **library/community center/park** that were within the project budget. She said that the City would announce the successful bidder as soon as that information was final. She also said she would notify the Group of the date for groundbreaking once it was scheduled.

With respect to South Lot, she said the list of issues and projects was similar to those in her February 1 status report. They reflect efforts to look at the entire pedestrian system, ADA compliance, and linkages to and integration of open spaces. She also noted that Bruce Lorig and his team would be available for **informal discussions with the Group**. Later in the meeting the Group agreed to a meeting on **Friday afternoon, March 4 at 4:30 PM**. Mark Troxel is to notify the Group of the meeting location by email.

Other items (not already discussed) included the following:

- A HUD loan to Lorig Associates to help finance the land acquisition for the Northgate Commons Project; loan evaluation will require approval by a City Loan Committee and the Seattle City Council.
- Northgate Mall redevelopment: Master Use Permit (MUP) expected in March
- 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Street Improvements Project
- Pedestrian connection between Northgate North (Target) and Northgate Mall
- Northgate Neighborhood Arts Council: Lorna Mrachek volunteered that the Arts Council has had discussions about the desirability of having the Park & Ride lot behind Target be an Arts Park when it is no longer needed as a Park and Ride.
- Neighborhood Business District Strategy Land Use amendments. In response to a member's question about how the proposed parking requirement amendments would relate to Northgate which already has minimum and maximum requirements in the Northgate Comprehensive Plan, Ms. Kirn indicated that if an existing code had more stringent requirements than the proposed amendments, the existing code would apply. Another member recounted a case she knew of where parking requirements for a new fourplex had been set at one car per unit. An email to the member indicated that local

residents felt the one-car requirement had proved to be inadequate, resulting in too many cars in the neighborhood.

### **Meeting Summary Approval**

The draft summary of the February 1 Stakeholders Group meeting was approved as written.

### **Northgate Mall Development Update**

Gary Weber reported that Simon's consultants were preparing documents needed for the Master Use Permit (MUP) application, and he expected to have documentation he could share in two to three weeks. In response to a question about the number of parking stalls Simon was requesting, Mr. Weber indicated that the Simon wanted four cars per 1000' of retail space for the mall to work well (whereas the code calls for 2.5 cars per 1000' of retail). In response to a question about whether or not Simon was required to add landscaping to the parking area on the eastside of the mall as part of the development, Ms. Kirn said she would ask Scott Kemp of DPD and get an answer to the question.

### **Deliberation and Completion of Draft CTIP Advice**

Tony Mazzella of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) described the changes that had been made in the Revised Northgate CTIP Planning, Financial, and Technical Assumptions (dated February 24) in response to comments at the February 1 Stakeholders Group meeting. Chief among them was replacing "performance measures" for non-arterial streets with a weighted scoring system that would allow ranking and prioritizing of non-arterial streets later in the process. He said that adjustments had also been made to segments of streets for analyzing delays and volumes. He said that while the overall study boundary had been kept, all traffic within the study area would be studied, regardless of where it originated. He said he would revisit the outcomes of using the methodology with the Stakeholders in the future. He referred to the document as a "working paper," which he defined as a document that helped us move forward. In the future, he said, we would see the results of applying the benchmarks. We would also have additional traffic data from forecasting that might influence how we work with these assumptions or their application. Ultimately, he said, the goal was to end up with a project list that is "feasible, doable, acceptable and consistent with the plan." In that context, he said he considered anything prior to the final document to be a "working document."

In response to a question about what would happen to the arterials (5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE or Northgate Way) if the cars were removed from neighborhood streets, Mr. Mazzella said this could increase demand on those arterials and possibly trigger improvements on arterials. However, he cautioned, making the arterials work better could have downsides for other modes of travel, including for pedestrians.

David Harrison then briefly noted SDOT's written responses to questions and comments from the February 1 meeting and asked for questions, comments or concerns. As there were none, he proposed the following changes to the Draft Advice, dated January 23, 2004:

- Page 1: The date would be changed to February 24.
- Page 1: The date of the final draft document would be revised to read February 24.

- Page 1, last sentence in item 2 at the bottom of the page would be revised to read: At the February 1 2005 meeting the Group received a report on the Subcommittee's work and raised further questions regarding the assumptions the report contained. Those questions were responded to in a revised document that was provided to the Stakeholders on February 24.
- Page 2, item 2 at the bottom of the page (Impact of Traffic on Residential Areas) would be replaced with language taken verbatim from Tony Mazzella's February 24 response to comments document, as follows: "The new approach takes into account the interaction of a range of street conditions that might affect livability. These conditions include traffic volume and speed, collision history, pedestrian facilities, school walk routes, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and unique street features such as street width, sharp curves and parking. Using a weighted scoring system, non-arterial streets will be ranked to help indicate where improvements are warranted. More defined benchmarks may be established later."

It was moved and seconded that the advice on the Policy, Financing and Technical Assumptions for the Northgate CTIP be approved, as amended. When the vote was called, there was unanimous approval of the revised advice.

Following the vote, two members complimented the tremendous efforts that Mr. Mazzella had made to understand and respond to concerns raised by the Stakeholders. One said that he had been "a prince to work with" and deserved a round of applause, which the Group then gave him. Another member complimented the Stakeholders for being so vigilant during the process.

### **City Council Role in Lorig Contract Rezone Requests**

Geri Beardsley of the City Council Central Staff briefly described the quasi-judicial process the City Council uses to rule on contract rezoning requests. She explained that once the issue reaches the City Council, the Council relies on the official record of input that has been developed through the Design Review process and by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). At that point, the Council makes a determination much as a judge would rather than as a legislative action, with no opportunity for public input directly to the Council. (This process was also described in a memo provided to the Stakeholders in advance of the meeting.) As a result of this process, she said, Stakeholders would need to give their advice on the Lorig proposal, including the contract rezoning requests, via DPD and Design Review rather than directly to the City Council. She clarified that the Lorig proposal as a whole, including the contract rezoning requests, would go before the Council in this manner. She added that a Hearing Examiner would hold a public hearing and those who wanted changes different from those DPD requested could ask to speak at that hearing. In response to a question, she noted that Stakeholders could testify about DPD's neighborhood business district parking proposal because it would be a legislative matter, not a quasi-judicial process.

### **Lorig Development Proposal for South Lot**

David Harrison explained that the facilitators had taken notes at the February 1 meeting on issues of concern to Stakeholders and anticipated adding to the list at today's meeting in preparation for drafting advice for the Group to discuss on March 15.

### ***Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel***

Miranda Maupin of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) gave a brief update on the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel. (Ms. Maupin's PowerPoint slides were included in meeting handouts.) She said that SPU continued to coordinate design with the Northgate Commons (the Lorig proposal). SPU, she said, was working on four key areas.

- The primary diagonal path so that it would be ADA accessible.
- Entry pathways, to tie into the pedestrian network.
- Understanding connections within South Lot, to determine the best route to serve the project and the whole community, and
- Connectivity around the site, to have continuity in pedestrian circulation with a consistent theme.

She presented a conceptual circulation plan.

Jackie Kirn reminded Stakeholders of the expected review schedule for the Lorig proposal. Following today's discussions, she said, a Community Forum is to be held on March 8. Stakeholders would hold informal discussions with Lorig prior to March 15 (later set for Friday, March 4 at 4:30 PM). Then, David Harrison would draft advice for the Group to review and finalize at its March 15 meeting.

She likened South Lot to a giant puzzle with complex topography, built-in constraints (water *will* flow downhill), and questions about connections to the north, south, east and west.

She pointed out the extension of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE which is to be funded for the most part by federal money, with the City and King County adding money for the unfunded parts of the project. She said on-street parking was planned as well as turning lanes. The goal was a nice pedestrian environment that would amplify the retail parking. She said the task at present was to determine the right of way for the street so Lorig could know where to put the buildings. She indicated that a traffic signal would most likely be needed at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE and NE 103<sup>rd</sup>. With respect to sidewalks, she said they were working hard to have 12'-wide sidewalks on the perimeter: six feet for sidewalks and six feet for landscaping (tree pits).

A member recalled that Design Guidance in June 2004 had called for 16'-wide sidewalks and said she hoped to see serious attention given to this guidance. Ms. Kirn responded that a requirement for 12'-wide sidewalks with landscaping applied at the present time; she said she would leave it to Lorig to respond to the Design Review recommendation for 16'-wide sidewalks. She did note that 16' sidewalks would use land that could impact the water quality channel as well as the Lorig project.

Ms. Maupin added that when SPU had done its feasibility analysis for the water quality channel, it had not assumed cuts for the steep slopes on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE. If they

were needed as a result of the wider sidewalks, retaining walls would also be needed to support the steep slopes. In this case, she said, SPU would have to go back to the drawing board and reconsider costs, aesthetics, etc. Ms. Kirn added that the design for South Lot had a strong emphasis on moving pedestrians through the interior of the commons as well as along the perimeter.

A member said that she did not think 16'-wide sidewalks were needed, especially given the very steep bank; she thought 12' sidewalks were appropriate.

David Harrison then introduced Steve Holt and Richard Loo, of Lorig Associates. Mr. Holt described his personal background and introduced Richard Loo, the architect leading the design element, to describe the project overall and the contract rezone request related to bulk and height. Mr. Holt said that he would address the parking rezone request.

### ***Conceptual Designs for the Northgate Commons and the ERA Care Facility***

Mr. Loo said that Lorig and Simon had agreed on the price of land only a month ago and now the project team was working on all fronts at once, with short deadlines. He said that the site had no 90° corners, which added to the design challenges. He noted three design issues that included the desire for a pedestrian-friendly environment, for an inviting interior courtyard, and for a workable transition to the water quality channel. He said the proposed six-story buildings would be wood-frame, with one story of retail under five stories of apartments. He described areas where they hoped to create plazas. He said there was again a "nibble of interest" from two grocery stores. If one were to become a tenant, it would be challenging because the site provides no "backside" for service. He said that if a grocery store did not become a tenant, Lorig would look for smaller retail.

Jeff Reibman of Weber+Thompson, architects for ERA Care, then briefly described the planning done to date for that facility, including spaces that would be open to the public. He said that the contract rezone request for an increase in height was needed because the height of buildings was measured from the interior of the site which is depressed relative to ground level of the rest of the site.

### ***Stakeholder Comments and Questions concerning the Design***

- One member complimented the design presented and suggested that the designers think about placing the trees next to the buildings rather than next to the sidewalks as a possible strategy to get to 16'-wide sidewalks. Ms. Kirn said that they were looking into that. Mr. Reibman indicated that ERA Care was looking at pulling the building on 100<sup>th</sup> back about 20' for practical reasons which might create an opportunity for a public/private space.
- A member requested that presenters add street names on visuals, to help orient Stakeholders.
- A member asked who "owned" the space in the interior. For example, if there were a problem in the future, could anyone be barred from the property? Referencing a facility on Mercer Island, Mr. Reibman said ERA Care wanted people to come in and would not fence the courtyard. Mr. Loo said that he expected the Commons, which was ultimately private property, would only be closed because of safety concerns and it was Lorig's

intent to design the site with safety in mind – to provide doors, eyes, and ears onto the Commons and the water channel.

- A member asked where access to parking was; she said she was opposed to a “drop off” lane. Another member whose parents are in an existing ERA Care facility said he wished it had such a drop off lane.
- Another member said that perhaps an inset on 100<sup>th</sup> could provide opportunities for natural system drainage and a green roof. Mr. Reibman said they were looking at them.
- Noting that some trees would have to be removed for construction, a member recommended that these trees could become large woody debris for the creek.

### ***Parking***

Mr. Holt pointed out that members had received in their meeting packets traffic the reports and studies Lorig had on parking. He said that Lorig had no incentive to cut parking so much that retail would fail. In the end, he said, if Lorig was unable to meet the needs for parking, the project could not go forward. He said that Lorig did not feel that the current code was pedestrian friendly or encouraged the use of transit.

He said that Lorig estimated the code would require a total of 911 parking stalls: 740 for the Lorig project and 171 for ERA Care. Lorig is proposing a total of 561 parking stalls: 498 in a structured unit and 63 in the ERA Care lot.

With respect to the demand for parking, Mr. Holt showed projected total parking demand in a PowerPoint slide. It indicated that Lorig and transit parking needs were at different times. The time when demand would be highest was expected to be at 6 PM on weekdays when residents were returning home and the Park & Ride was gradually emptying out. In response to the question posed at the previous meeting – what happens if it doesn’t work – he said that the Park & Ride could provide the extra capacity if needed.

Matt Aho of Metro/King County then briefly described discussions that Metro has had with Lorig, noting that no formal agreements have been reached. The discussions involve purchasing an easement for Lorig’s development to use 100 stalls during peak hours (8 AM to 5 PM). He said they would share 60 stalls for guests and retail customers. He noted two precedents for shared use: one with Northgate Mall and another with a multi-family housing development in Renton. He said that funding was allocated in the Metro budget that could be used to move quickly. Part of an agreement, he said, would be Transportation Demand Management program elements which were described on p. 44 of the handouts. The Flex Car program might also be appropriate. He concluded by noting that the King County Council would have to approve the shared-parking agreement.

### ***Stakeholder Questions and Comments on Parking***

- A member commended Lorig on the proposed 1.5 stalls per unit and spoke in favor of the use of Flex Car. She also asked if Seattle could think about shared amenities (like public bikes in Copenhagen) which mean you park once and move around. In response, Mr. Holt clarified that Lorig was proposing 1.5 stalls per unit for the condominiums only. The parking proposal for apartments, he said, was for .8 stalls per unit.

- A member asked Mr. Aho if Metro/King County would continue to share space with Simon and asked to know how much shared parking was planned. In response, Mr. Aho said that Metro/King County was in active discussions with Simon about an extra floor on the parking garage planned south of JC Penneys. Beyond Simon and Lorig, he said, there were not many opportunities for shared parking in the area. He said the agency's goal was to spread the Park & Ride out as much as possible because it would alleviate congestion problems during peak hours.
- Another member asked Mr. Aho if he were aware of the planned offloading of the Park & Ride at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and NE 112<sup>th</sup> in the future. He assured her that he was. He said this would occur as the agency was able to replace the 400 stalls that would be lost.
- A member asked if there were any organized opposition to the parking rezone requests. In response, Mr. Holt said that he was unaware of any organized opposition. He said he was at the meeting to provide the facts. He added that Lorig hoped its economic interests would help the community reach the goals in the Northgate Comp Plan.
- A member pointed out that the proposal at this meeting was quite different from what was shown last fall. He noted that Lorig was proposing 40% less parking than required in the code – which was roughly equal to an entire parking level. Mr. Holt said that Lorig was proposing parking on two levels and on the lid. He said that on-street parking was not included in the 561 stalls Lorig was proposing to build. He again reiterated the point that Lorig's \$100 million investment would fail if adequate parking was not provided.
- A member asked if including a grocery store in the development would change things. She also noted the conflict inherent in trying to encourage transit use and in meeting parking needs of apartment dwellers. She requested to see pedestrian access points, curb cuts, garage entry and exit points, and areas with double-wide curb cuts -- so the Stakeholders could evaluate them. As we get further into design, she said the Group would want to see more definition as to what is planned. For ERA Care, she said, the Group wanted the pedestrian entry way to be inviting from the southeast. She asked where the curb cuts for entry into the garage would be.
- It was pointed out that the Northgate Overlay does not allow for shared parking.
- A member expressed concern about shared use of the Park & Ride stalls. He noted that transportation is the #1 problem in the area and that Seattle's Park & Ride lots are the worst in the region as far as the number of stalls go. This proposal would impact that number. The problem is worrisome, he said, if one looks at what's coming in the next 10 years. He asked what responsibilities there were for policing use of the stalls. In response, Mr. Aho said that as a result of extending 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NE the current Park & Ride lot would lose 65 to 70 stalls. With respect to the future, he said Metro/King County did not plan to increase the number of Park & Ride stalls, to encourage use of transit.
- A member expressed concern that bike paths were not shown in the designs. In response, Mr. Holt said they understood this was important but they were not that far along in the design.

Mr. Loo said that Lorig was scheduled for an Early Design Guidance meeting on March 21 (Monday). Ms. Kirn said the City would send notice to Stakeholders about the time of the meeting.

Mr. Harrison said he had conferred with the Chair and Vice-Chair and concluded that the Group was not yet ready to review and finalize advice at the March 15 meeting. He proposed holding the Community Forum on March 8 as planned, holding the March 15 Stakeholders Group meeting as planned, and adding a shorter meeting after mid March to complete the advice. The Group concurred.

At 6:30 PM the Group took a 10-minute break.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Ave Streetscape Project**

Sandra Woods of SDOT gave a report on the changes to the project as a result of the Subcommittee's input, including adding a crosswalk, revising curb radii to slow traffic and a wider lane for turns on NE 105<sup>th</sup>. She also noted other improvements, including eliminating a pedestrian push button to cross the driveway into the Mall but keeping it to cross 5<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and putting signals on mast arms rather than on wires. In response to a question about water detention, Ms. Woods said that SDOT had worked creatively with Seattle Parks to develop a solution whereby the water will drain to the detention for the civic center.

### **Community Forum Format and Approach**

Mark Troxel of DPD described the proposed approach for the March 8 Community Forum, which was patterned after the October 26 Community Forum. He explained that the open house had been cut to a half hour, leaving one and a half hours for the meeting. He reviewed the proposed agenda.

- A member requested that a mechanism be available at the meeting for the public to register an opinion in light of the quasi-judicial process coming up. Another member supported this suggestion.
- A member asked what outreach had been conducted. Mr. Troxel replied that postcards had been mailed to 1800 households. He also expressed hope that the community groups on the Stakeholders Group would assist with notification. Ms. Damji noted that the Northgate Chamber of Commerce lists all Stakeholders Group events at its website.
- A member observed that the students at the college did not seem to know what was going on with the Stakeholders Group. She asked if there were a way to get them involved. The Chair replied that 70% of the College's students work and it is difficult to engage them when they are coming from or going to work.
- A member asked if the Mall advertised meetings; Mr. Weber replied that it does not.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair announced that Representative Debra Fulton was resigning from the Group. He thanked her for her many contributions to the Group's work.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. LaFayette adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

### **Meeting Attendance**

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

**Simon Property Group:** Rep. Gary Weber

**Maple Leaf Community Council:** Rep. Janice Camp, Alt. Mel Vannice

**Licton Springs Community Council:** Alt. Shannon Snider  
**Haller Lake Community Club:** Rep. Velva Maye, Alt. Sue Geving  
**Pinehurst Community Council:** Rep. Lorna Mrachek  
**Victory Heights Community Council:** Rep. Brad Cummings  
**Northgate Chamber of Commerce:** Rep. Shaiza Damji  
**Thornton Creek Alliance:** Rep. John Lombard; Alt. Cheryl Klinker  
**Thornton Creek Legal Defense:** Rep. Janet Way, Alt. Jan Brucker  
**Northgate Chamber of Commerce:** Rep. Shaiza Damji  
**North Seattle Community College:** Rep. Ron LaFayette, Alt. Bruce Kieser  
**Owners of Three or More Acres:** Rep. Kevin Wallace  
**Senior Housing:** Rep. Jeanne Hayden; Alt. Sandra Morgan  
**Renters/Condominium Owners:** Rep. Debra Fulton, Alt. Brad Mason  
**Businesses Outside the Mall:** Rep. Michelle Rupp  
**At-large:** Rep. Shawn Oleson, Alt. Barbara Maxwell  
**At-large:** Marilyn Firlotte, Mike Vincent

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included David Harrison and Vicki King.